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Jewish Mission and Chiliasm in the Reformed Churches in the Netherlands, 1896-1948

D. Jewish Mission

The Russian pogroms of 1882 were widely denounced in Protestant circles in Holland. In the aftermath, Kuyper quietly dropped any further hints of the desirability of a "guest status" for Dutch Jewry. Ivo Schöffer believes that it was no longer seen as opportune to include that subject in the program of the Anti-Revolutionary Party.[23] Instead, he now probed for ways to confront the Jews by missionary means. First of all, it was necessary to make sure that the RCN would no longer be affected by chiliasm. Typical for chiliastic thinking was the belief that the Jews, whether converted to Christianity or not, still had a part to play in the divine plan. The question of how was for God alone to decide. For Kuyper this was quietist and unacceptable. Human beings had to act and to make choices for which they would be held accountable. The only remaining hope for a Jew was conversion, and this implied that he stopped being a Jew. "To choose to be part of Israel in the flesh is to reject Christ; and to accept Christ is to break away from Israel in the flesh. For a Jewish convert it is not enough to believe in Christ, he must also renounce his national identity."[24]

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A majority of the Secessionists combined with Kuyper and his followers (who had broken away from the Dutch Reformed Church in 1886), to form the Reformed Churches in the Netherlands (1892). Kuyper welcomed these former Secessionists as useful allies but made it clear that their chiliasm ("being false and Jewish and particularistic") would no longer be tolerated.[25] For the program of Jewish Mission, formally organized by the Synod in 1896 and based on principles that had been laid down by Kuyper, Judaism had become a pejorative term. The Church, and only the Church, could be recognized as the true new Israel.[26]

What could be done to encounter this perceived threat? The Jewish Mission of the RCN received its ordinances from the General Synod of Middelburg in 1896. As might be expected, chiliasm was emphatically condemned. The wording of the decisions being made by this General Synod sounded strongly antithetic.[27] A future restoration of the Jews was out of the question. Their refusal to honour Jesus as the son of God could not be pardoned for the sake of any incapacity to believe (as maintained by a deterministic reading of the classic Calvinist dogma of predestination). If the Jews, who ought to know better because of their intimate knowledge of Scripture, continued to resist Jesus as God's chosen Messiah, then they were committing blasphemy and sacrilege. Kuyper had been actively engaged in the process of drafting the new policy that was to provide a type of Jewish Mission that was unlike anything the Netherlands had seen so far.[28] As Kuyper remarked, the claim of Jesus to be the Messiah required an unambiguous response. There was only yes or no. This implied the necessity of taking sides, for or against Jesus, for or against Judaism: "To choose for Israel in the flesh is to reject Christ; and to accept Christ is to break away from Israel in the flesh. The implication is that any Jew who becomes a believer in Christ by definition renounces any trace of his being a Jew. In this sense we see that far more is being required from a Jewish convert than from a heathen."[29] Inherited responsibility for the crucifixion of Christ weighed heavily on the shoulders of any Jew who persisted in denying the

-From pages 398-399.

https://www.thebanner.org/features/2021/09/abraham-kuyper-cancel-or-celebrate

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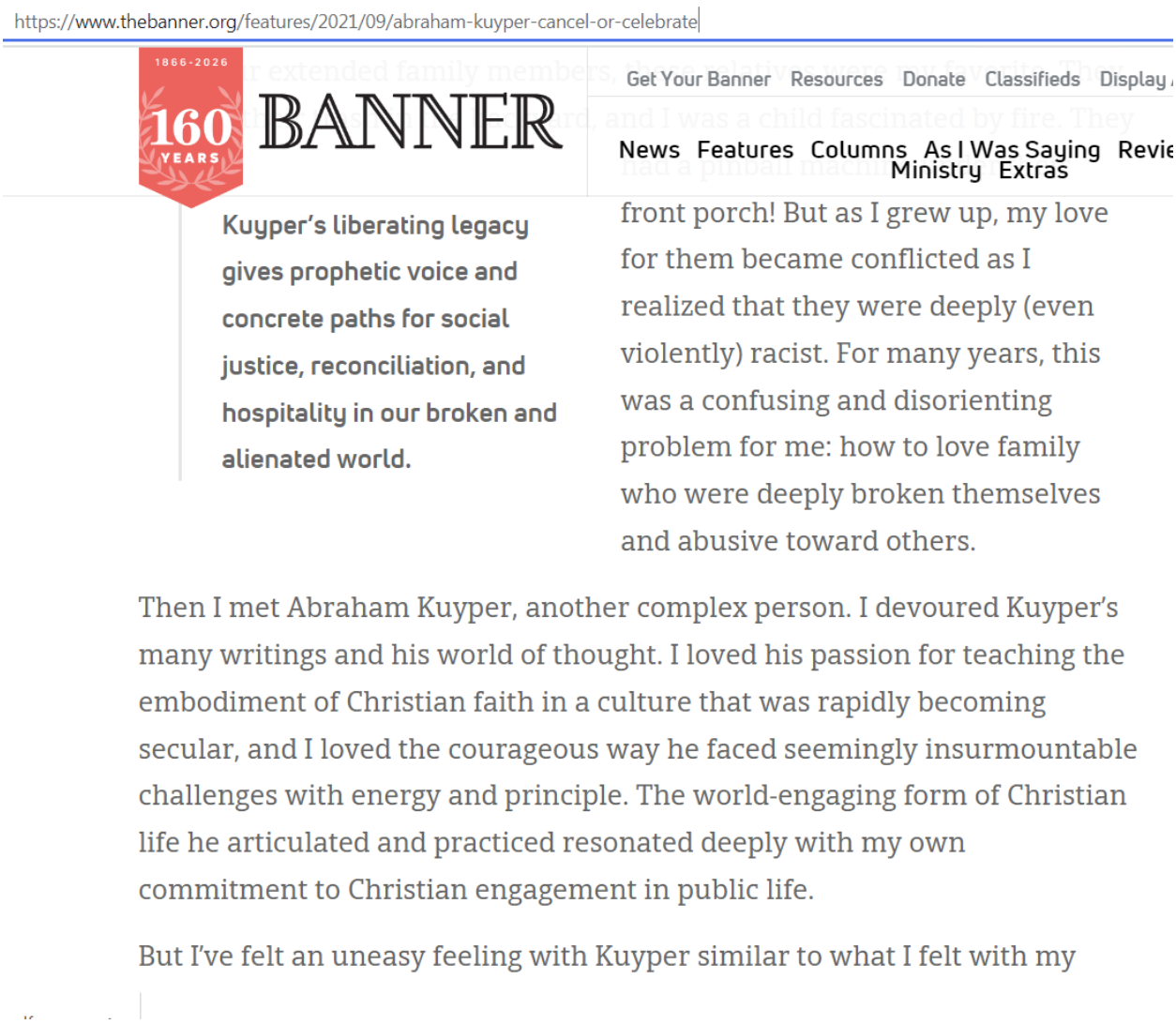
of the Church: The Sacramental Ecclesiology of Abraham Kuyper (Wipf &Stock, 2020).



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Kuyper's liberating legacy gives prophetic voice and concrete paths for social justice, reconciliation, and hospitality in our broken and alienated world.

front porch! But as I grew up, my love for them became conflicted as I realized that they were deeply (even violently) racist. For many years, this was a confusing and disorienting problem for me: how to love family who were deeply broken themselves and abusive toward others.

Then I met Abraham Kuyper, another complex person. I devoured Kuyper's many writings and his world of thought. I loved his passion for teaching the embodiment of Christian faith in a culture that was rapidly becoming secular, and I loved the courageous way he faced seemingly insurmountable challenges with energy and principle. The world-engaging form of Christian life he articulated and practiced resonated deeply with my own commitment to Christian engagement in public life.

But I've felt an uneasy feeling with Kuyper similar to what I felt with my

https://www.modernreformation.org/resources/articles/neither-individualism-nor-statism (no "Jews")

"By 1891 Kuyper gave more specific attention to the issues of workers and their needs in the modern world. He recognized the new problems facing workers in the nineteenth century and the growing attractions of socialism for many. He helped to organize a Christian Social Congress and spoke to its first meeting on November 9, 1891, on the subject, "The Social Question and the Christian Religion." This remarkable address displays Kuyper's vision for labor and the Christian calling to work. Tracing Kuyper's reflections in this historic address can stimulate us to think more carefully about work and calling in our time. "

more generally,
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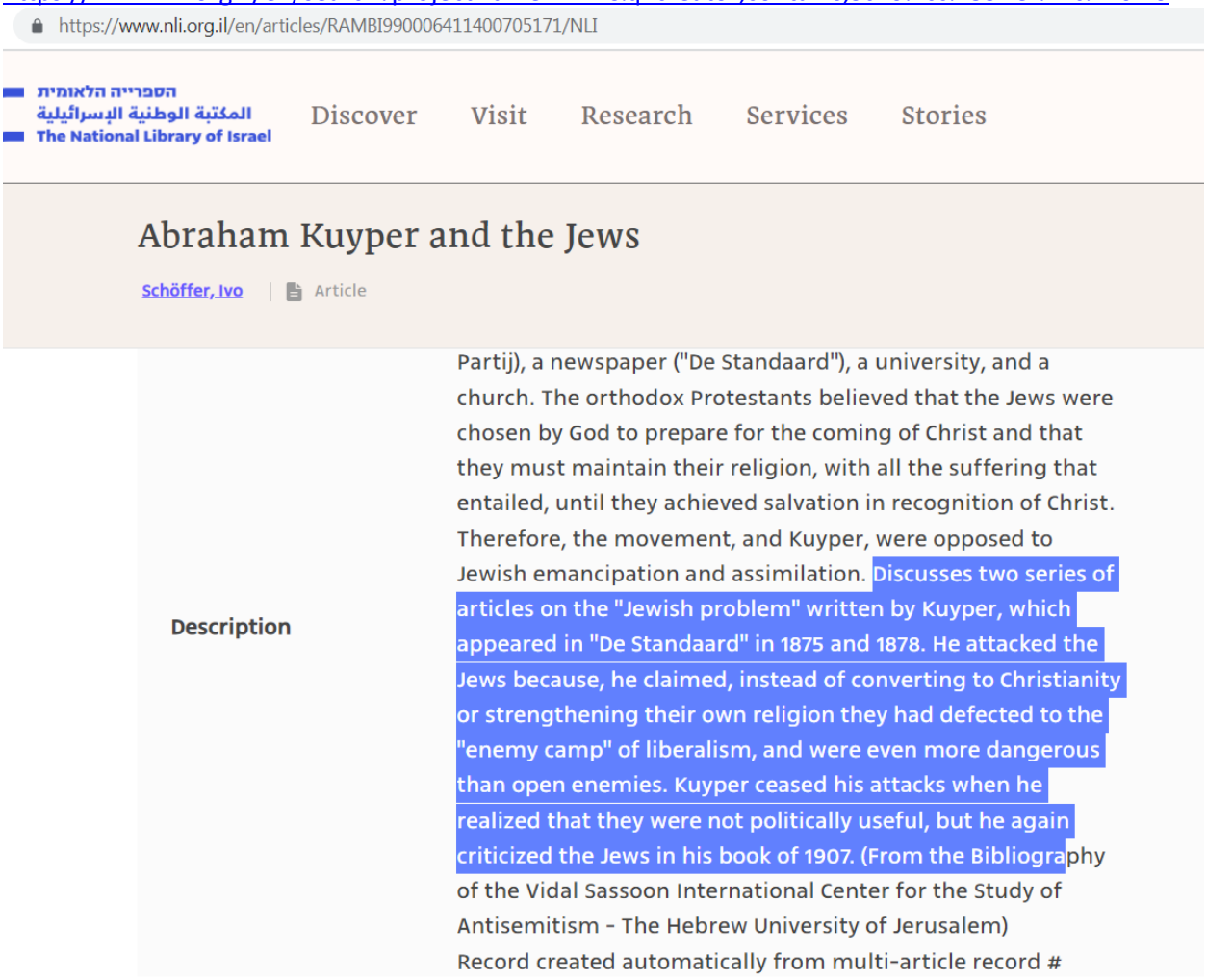
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Stories
Abraham Kuyper and the Jews
Schöffer, Ivo
Article
Description
Partij), a newspaper ("De Standaard"), a university, and a church. The orthodox Protestants believed that the Jews were chosen by God to prepare for the coming of Christ and that they must maintain their religion, with all the suffering that entailed, until they achieved salvation in recognition of Christ. Therefore, the movement, and Kuyper, were opposed to Jewish emancipation and assimilation. Discusses two series of articles on the "Jewish problem" written by Kuyper, which appeared in "De Standaard" in 1875 and 1878. He attacked the Jews because, he claimed, instead of converting to Christianity or strengthening their own religion they had defected to the "enemy camp" of liberalism, and were even more dangerous than open enemies. Kuyper ceased his attacks when he realized that they were not politically useful, but he again criticized the Jews in his book of 1907. (From the Bibliography of the Vidal Sassoon International Center for the Study of Antisemitism - The Hebrew University of Jerusalem)
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Abraham Kuyper not only founded the newspaper *De Standaard* (The Standard) in 1872 but also served as its owner and editor-in-chief for many years.

"Ons program", by Abraham Kuyper

https://www.nli.org.il/en/books/NNL_ALEPH990026691570205171/NLI not sure if this is his same book?

Title	Palestina : het heilige land / door A. Kuyper.
Publisher	Kampen : J. H. Kok
Creation Date	[1925]